



MEMORANDUM

August 18, 2004

TO: NCAA Division II Directors of Athletics
NCAA Division II Head Coaches of Fall Sports.

FROM: Jill Willson, chair
NCAA Division II Championships Committee.

SUBJECT: Preseason Educational Campaign.

In recent months, continuing efforts toward enhancing the membership's knowledge of the preseason for sports participating in the fall have included collecting research data and developing educational campaigns. The purpose of this memorandum is to request that you join the NCAA Division II Presidents Council in an educational initiative designed to increase awareness of institutional responsibility for protecting the health of and providing a safe environment for all student-athletes participating in pre-season workout sessions. Although it has been a year since the introduction of the football preseason practice model, other fall sports can adopt similar guidelines while conducting late summer workout sessions until further reviews are conducted. Sport committees continue to work with the NCAA DII Championships Committee to evaluate student-athlete well being issues. Common preseason model components that carry over to all sports include, but are not limited to:

- Conduct pre-participation medical examinations for all student-athletes.
- Provide an ample activity progression schedule at the beginning of the preseason period to allow student-athletes to adequately acclimate to the environment, equipment and intensity of exercise.
- Provide appropriate recovery periods between both daily practice sessions and practice days.
- Provide adequate hydration (electrolyte drinks when possible) during all activity sessions, as well as following all practices and during meals.
- Develop and practice a facility or field-specific emergency care plan.

For the educational campaign to be effective, it is imperative that the appropriate people have the appropriate information. As a result, we recommend that you distribute the educational information and consider conducting a meeting that includes head coaches of fall sports, student-athlete captains from each fall sport, the head athletic trainer, faculty-athletic representative, team physician, strength and conditioning coach, compliance coordinator and your institution's primary risk manager.

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During this meeting, we also recommend that you review the following enclosures:

- Coaching Principles on Periodization and Conditioning Principles.
- Emergency Care and Coverage.
- Dietary Supplements and Banned Substances.
- Preventing Heat Illness: Tips of Enhancing Recovery.

Last year, the head athletic trainer of all NCAA member institutions received at least one set of three posters educating student-athletes on how to prevent heat illness and enhance recovery during the preseason period. If you are unable to locate these posters or would like an additional set, please contact the NCAA national office health and safety department at 317/917-6313.

We realize that participation in intercollegiate athletics involves some measure of risk and that not all injuries are preventable, despite our best efforts and intentions. However, we believe that we must continue to do all that we can to minimize injuries and catastrophic events, and the educational initiatives outlined in this memorandum are a good step toward this goal.

Recent studies have provided positive findings related to the football model. Some of these preliminary findings suggest:

- Clothing and equipment significantly decreased the body's ability to eliminate heat.
- The greatest physiological strain on the body occurred on Days 1 and 2.
- The model allowed players to gradually adapt to the progressively increasing stressors of the uniform and practice durations.
- Days 5 through 8 may have provided similar intensity and heat stress that was once part of Days 2 through 4 in the original plan if appropriate progressions and rehydration policies were not followed.
- Afternoon or late day practice sessions on single session days allowed student-athletes to enter practice at a more hydrated state.
- The three-hour recovery period allowed student-athletes to return their body's core temperature to an acceptable level.
- An intrusive hydration schedule during practices, and normal hydration during meals and recovery periods permitted all student-athletes to limit body weight changes and the chance of being in a chronic dehydrated state.

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- Recovery, rehydration and reduced injury risk can be enhanced by modifying the pattern of double sessions in preseason.
- Even with aggressive rehydration practices, some student-athletes were more susceptible to heat illness and should be monitored closely.
- Those individuals who were ill, unfit, non-heat acclimatized, sleep deprived or had a large body mass were at greatest risk of heat illnesses.

Please know that work continues to be done to study issues related to preseason activities and that further recommendations are likely. The championships committee has selected a small sample of schools to complete the survey; however, to better facilitate division-wide feedback, we have included the same questionnaire in this packet that examines current preseason activities across sports. We are encouraging all schools to participate. If you would like to submit information, please provide a copy of the team activity survey to all head coaches of fall sports, request completion and ensure appropriate signatures, and submit the completed survey to the NCAA by September 24, 2004. All information will be evaluated collectively and remain confidential.

Please share the enclosed educational information with appropriate coaches, athletic trainers, and the student-athletes participating in preseason workout activities. A printable version can be found on the NCAA Division II Web site at www1.ncaa.org/membership/governance/division_II/index.html.

Thank you for your continuous commitment to student-athlete well-being and supporting efforts that help improve their health and safety.

PS/SC:drf

Enclosures

cc (memo and survey only): Conference Commissioners
Senior Woman Administrators
Faculty Athletics Representatives
Head Athletic Trainers
Student-Athlete Advisory Committee